AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): Under the Growth Centre Scheme four Growth Centres at Chhatrapur (Ganjam), Kalinganar-Dubri (Cuttatck), Jharsuguda (Jharsuguda) and Kesinga (Kesinga) have been sactioned in the State of Orissa and Central Assistance of Rs. 50 lakhs, 600 lakhs, 2000 lakhs and 125 lakhs respectively has been released to these Growth Centres. One Growth Centre *i.e.* Kesinga has become functional as allotment of industrial plots has commenced there.

Development of townships in NER

1381. SHRIRAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that four townships in the North-Eastern Region are proposed for creating congenial atmosphere to attract foreign investment;

(b) if so, the names of townships along with their States; and

(c) the details of amount sanctioned and released by the Central Government for the Development of these townships?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) No, Sir. A new Industrial Policy and other concessions has been notified on 24th December, 1997 for development of industry in the NE Region.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Programme for welfare of salt workers

1382. SHRI BACHANILEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any programme for the welfare of salt workers in the country, specially in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof and funds allocated for the purpose during the last three years; and

(c) the steps being initiated bV Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) and (b) The implementation

of the various labour laws for the welfare of labour including labourers employed in the salt industry is the responsibility of the Labour Department of the respective State Governments. Office of the Salt Commissioner, an attached office of this Department is supplementing efforts of the State- Govenrment by extending financial assistance to execute various labour welfare schemes such as educational facitlties for the children of workers, health check up, construction of labour rest sheds, water supply schemes, labour housing, provision of Community Centres/recreation facilities and audio-visual aids for improving skills in production of Salt/ Quality control etc. Office of the Salt Commissioner also extends financial assistance to the salt works affected by natural calamities by way of granting relief in the form of *ex-gratia* grant and loans for rehabilitation.

During the last three years, office of the Salt Commission has extended financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 42.79 lakhs on the Labour Welfare Schemes.

(c) The Code of Principles formulated by the Government for extending financial assistance for execution of the development and labour welfare works in the salt factories accords priority for the execution of Labour Welfare Schemes. State Governments and the Salt producers have also been advised to sponsor more schemes for the welfare of the labourers.

Decline in coffee export

1383. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether country's Coffee exports have gone down during 2001 -2002;

(b) if so, the reaction therefor; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken to boost export of India Coffee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) Due to low prices of coffee prevailing in the international market and also increase in the domestic consumption of coffee from 60,000 MT to 70,000 MT, there has been a decline in coffee exports from India during 2001-2002 as compared to the previous years.